

From: cvsrj
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 11/22/01 12:31pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

To whom it may concern:

This settlement does nothing to redress the losses to the individual end user and small hardware/software companies.

Individual customers, including myself, have spent hundreds of frustrating hours trying to get Microsoft Windows software to work then buying the next version of the software because something that was available was simply left out of the previous software apparently so it could be in a later upgrade - (ICS in win98se is one example). The upgrades for windows continue to be \$100 -200 or so each. At the same time hardware has dropped at least 10X in price while there has been a 10x increase in hardware functionality. Each upgrade of windows also consumes a lot more space and processor time for only slightly increased functionality. Most of the improvements were originally the intellectual property of other companies that was bought or just appropriated by Microsoft. Since windows remains a monopoly the market cannot control the price. The government must therefore control the price for windows and it must drop equally with hardware costs -- individual consumers should be offered the same price as hardware companies. Service should also improve dramatically. I have bought upgrades for windows (95, 98 (x2), 98se (x4), ME (x3)) for each of several computers - however over the last few years when I call Microsoft service because the software has problems the clear implication is that I first need to prove I have a separate copy of windows including upgrades for each computer - which I do - then I get a solution that does not work.

Developers of Microsoft office, Microsoft Games, and other software also have far more direct access to information concerning the windows operating system than other companies in the United States. I agree that the code is should be a trade secret but all United States companies and individuals that develop software need to have free access to at least how the source code works for the only operating system available to run their software. Perhaps DOJ should also keep copies of all source code in trust at a site other than Microsoft. DOJ employees will essentially be Microsoft employees if they do everything at the Microsoft campus.

The final comment I have is the corporate culture of our country is changing so short-term gains for stockholders that buy and sell rapidly (Including executives that use stock options and sell them the same day) is more important than preparing for the future. Microsoft does seem to invest in some basic research - that is good. But it is clear that they prefer to buy the ideas of others. The settlement should encourage basic research at the college/post graduate level and not just bring everyone up to the same mediocre level, as will be done by just giving Microsoft software to poorly performing primary and secondary schools.

Very Respectfully
Chris Stacy